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No Easy Answers

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LETTERS

No Easy Answers

April 1, 2011

To the Editor:

In his essay “No Exit” (March 20), David Greenberg dutifully points out some old and recent books whose endings seem “unpersuasive and unsupported by what came before.” But I disagree with his characterization of Walter Lippmann and his 1922 treatise “Public Opinion.”

Lippmann did not see things as, say, John Dewey did. Lippmann did not believe that education would cure what Greenberg, citing H. L. Mencken, refers to as the “imbecility” of the masses. On the contrary, Lippmann believed that only a technocratic, elite class could do that, and his books explain a reality in accordance with that solution.

In that respect, Greenberg’s views, and his solution, appear to mirror Lippmann’s. After all, Greenberg’s essay aims to explain to readers, the most enlightened segment of society, how things are and how they ought to be understood. Furthermore, his very explanation contains the solution, as his eloquently titled essay proves.

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A version of this article appears in print on , Page 6 of the Sunday Book Review with the headline: No Easy Answers